



Emergency Management **UPDATE**

9/11 Anniversary Issue (September 2002)



Drawing the line. The Commonwealth is taking a hard look at background checks for state employees in sensitive positions and streamlining procedures for responses to health emergencies. (Top: VDEM Photo by Bob Lambert. Bottom: Photo Courtesy Patrick County Economic Development Department/Mary Beth Roberson.)

Hometown safety key to homeland security

by Barbara Bowen, Managing Editor

On the first anniversary of the worst terrorist attack on U.S. soil, Virginia faces the future with a solid strategy to help ensure that history does not repeat itself.

This strategy integrates state and local forces into a national coalition under the coordination of Homeland Security Director Tom Ridge.

While each alliance member will play a key role in the war on terrorism, front line emergency managers will be pivotal to commonwealth preparedness.

"Local emergency management is key to our success," says John Hager, assistant to the governor for commonwealth preparedness. "Hometowns need to be safe for the homeland to be safe."

The Nation

One year after Sept. 11, the nation and the Commonwealth are working closely in a high-tempo, proactive environment.

To address terrorism issues, President Bush has endorsed a national effort to include active partnerships between the federal, state and local government in conjunction with private sector.

"In this concerted national effort, we are focused against terrorists and all threats to the homeland," says Hager. "Everybody plays."

George Foresman, deputy assistant to the governor for commonwealth preparedness, points to three major developments affecting our operational tempo at the national level:

- 1. Creation of the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security.** Focused attention on how agencies work together and what needs to be done to secure the nation.
- 2. Release of the President's national strategy on homeland security.** Provides the road map of how federal, state, local and private entities would work together across functional areas.
- 3. Proposal to establish the Department of Homeland Security.** Serves as the means to an end with the objective of improved coordination among all players.

The Commonwealth

Cooperation and communication are the watchwords for state terrorism preparedness.

Building on the foundation laid by the Gilmore administration, Gov. Mark Warner put together a bipartisan coalition from the legislative, state and local government, private sector and academic communities to help build a "Secure Virginia."

"From the Pentagon to anthrax, Virginians have responded swiftly and effectively to deal with terrorist threats," said Gov. Warner.

"What we have learned, however, is that much more work must be done cooperatively with our neighbors, and in concert with the federal government, to be as prepared as we can be."

Established on Jan. 31, the Secure Virginia Panel includes a number of sub-panels and the Domestic Preparedness Working Group. VDEM staff have been hard at work in many of the sub-panels as

(continued on page 2)

Homeland Security

(continued from page 1)

well as the working group to ensure first responder and emergency management concerns were brought to the table.

Local emergency managers also got an opportunity to make their voices heard during an April 3 forum attended by professionals from around Virginia representing a range of disciplines.

The Secure Virginia Panel's first report, released on July 30, made six recommendations, all of which are supported by Gov. Warner.

Items of particular interest to emergency managers include proposed enhancements to the state Emergency Alert System and the designation of www.vaemergency.com as the primary Web site for public emergency and disaster communications. (See the table on page 3 for a full overview of the recommendations contained in the first Secure Virginia Panel report.)

Foresman says citizens and government officials are better educated now about emergency management than they were on Sept. 11.

He adds that there has been a paradigm shift in the relationship between government and the private sector as they look for ways to collaborate on information sharing. As much of the state's critical infrastructure is in the private sector, these partnerships are especially important.

The Sept. 11 attacks also highlighted the value of interstate and intrastate cooperation. To that end, Gov. Warner joined his counterparts from Maryland and Washington, D.C., as well as the Homeland Security Office to develop regional agreements on terrorism preparedness and response. (See regional pact article on page 3 to learn more about the commitments to action.)

Foresman says the regional summit represents the tip of the iceberg for implementation of Statewide Mutual Aid (SMA) and Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC).

Disasters don't respect geographical boundaries and neither should preparedness and response.

Hager adds that Virginia's approach to terrorism preparedness will continue to be regionally based, including efforts such as Hampton Roads' port security task force.



Getting the message out. Gov. Mark Warner has approved the Secure Virginia Panel recommendation to enhance the state's Emergency Alert System (EAS). (Courtesy Photo, WRVA Radio.)

"We are better prepared today than we were on Sept. 11. That doesn't mean we weren't prepared. We simply provided an extraordinary response to an unprecedented event."

George Foresman

Deputy Assistant to the Governor for Commonwealth Preparedness

The Front Lines

Hager says the silver lining on the terrorism front is that the tragedy has brought our nation together.

The attacks got our attention. State and local governments are now looking to solve long standing problems such as interoperability of radio systems and standardized incident command.

Information sharing continues to be a source of concern for local governments. In the aftermath of the Pentagon and anthrax attacks, Foresman says conflicting information at the state and federal level took on a life of its own and emphasized the value of consistent messages.

He adds that policy, structural and organizational changes in place at the state level will ensure that Virginia will press forward for rapid communications with localities during these crises.

Funding became another source of concern for local governments in the months following 9/11.

As communities looked for funding to enhance response capabilities, VDEM

moved to sort out the new federal programs and requirements.

"There is a wave of new funding on the horizon," says VDEM State Coordinator Michael Cline. "Get ready because timelines are going to be short when it finally arrives."

Cline says VDEM already has experienced rapid turnaround in applying for monies under existing programs and predicts that initial funding will start flowing relatively quickly during the next year. However, localities can also expect standards to stiffen after an accreditation program gets under way.

"Initial allocations will probably be made on a common base and population formula, but out-year funding will depend on performance and improved capabilities," Cline says.

"We have a real task ahead of us. There probably will be money to do the things we want, but it may not come in the form we prefer.

"The bottom line is that we're looking at Virginia receiving \$70 to \$90 million in federal funds for fiscal 2003, including direct allocation for law enforcement, emergency medical services, emergency management and fire services."

Hager points out that all disasters are ultimately local events with local responders being the first to arrive and the last to leave. An informed and proactive citizenry will be critical to Virginia preparedness and that process begins at the local level.

A Virginia-based version of Citizen Corps will be part of that effort, offering volunteer opportunities to help create a better prepared population.

As emergency managers continue to prepare for and respond to a variety of unknowns, Foresman says it is important to remember that all-hazards preparedness is still the key to success. Virginians are far more likely to experience a natural disaster than a terrorist attack.

"We saw a great rise in the emergency management profession after Hurricane Andrew," says Foresman.

"Now, emergency managers are seen as front line coordinators of all functions of government.

"We are better prepared today than we were on Sept. 11," says Foresman. "That doesn't mean we weren't prepared. We simply provided an extraordinary response to an unprecedented event."

Secure Virginia Panel Progress Report

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Action</i>
Background Checks for Public Sector Employees in Sensitive Positions	A proposal will be developed in accordance with applicable federal guidelines to include National Crime Information Center checks.
Employer Validation of Foreign Workers Eligibility	Gov. Warner has directed the Virginia Cooperative Extension and the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to provide training so state employers can better monitor the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) Employment Eligibility Verification form.
Emergency Alert System Enhancements	The first phase of a plan for a satellite-based emergency messaging system capable of transmitting EAS messages to individual stations or groups of stations, simultaneously and instantaneously, has been approved. Federal funding will support this effort.
Permanent Web site for Communicating with the Public During Disasters	The use of federal funds has been approved to upgrade www.vaemergency.com as Virginia's single source of 24-hour terrorism/disaster preparedness information.
Information Technology Security Improvements	A training program will be initiated to establish a statewide information security structure.
Medical Emergency Preparedness Authority	The Attorney General will provide an opinion on Virginia's legal authority to respond to a public health emergency by suspending health professional licensure requirements, enforcing quarantines and publicly taking private medical personnel and supplies for emergency response.

National Capitol Region Summit yields regional pact

Last month's National Capitol Region Summit on Homeland Security was the first of its kind in the nation to address regional anti-terrorism initiatives.

Working in partnership with the White House Office of Homeland Security, Gov. Mark R. Warner, Gov. Parris N. Glendening (Maryland) and District of Columbia Mayor Anthony A. Williams signed a joint statement outlining eight commitments to action:

- Coordinate decision-making among federal, state and local governments and the private sector for major incidents or emergencies.
- Enhance coordination and information sharing among law enforcement agencies and U.S. attorneys through their anti-terrorism task forces.
- Protect key regional infrastructure assets and services.
- Develop a common set of emergency measures to protect the health and safety of the public.
- Strengthen mutual aid agreements among the jurisdictions.
- Develop a regional joint public information system to provide authoritative and coordinated disaster information.
- Establish Citizen Corps programs within the region.
- Develop annual terrorism and security-related training exercises.



Crossing the line. Training exercises like the Comprehensive Hazmat Emergency Response Capability Assessment Program or CHER-CAP, held in Chesapeake last year, will now take on a broader scope as Virginia seeks to improve regional preparedness. (Photo Courtesy City of Chesapeake.)



The Phoenix Project: The Pentagon and the Commonwealth rise from the ashes

by Bob Lambert, Staff Writer



On September 11, 1941, ground was broken for a vast new building to serve as the headquarters of America's armed forces. Sixty years later, this symbol of American freedom fell victim to a terrorist attack.

In the year since the Pentagon and World Trade Center attacks, emergency managers have also been breaking new ground. Building on strengths and identifying weaknesses, they are making strides to improve preparedness for future disaster responses.



Then and Now. In a tribute to American resilience, workers were able to rebuild the exterior of the Pentagon in record time. Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz (center) addresses the audience during the Dedication Capsule ceremony on June 11, 2002. (DoD photo by R.D. Ward.)

The road to preparedness. (Right) Recommendations from Arlington County's independent after-action report included plans for a phased, orderly evacuation, which would have helped alleviate the massive 9/11 traffic jams. Read the full report on the Arlington County Web site, www.co.arlington.va.us, by clicking on "Emergency Preparedness." (Photo by Jack Bielhart, Virginia Department of Transportation.)



Unity of Purpose. (Below Right) The events of 9/11 inspired volunteerism among Southwest Virginia citizens. (VDEM Photo by Suzanne Simmons.)



Getting onboard for port security.

Tidewater officials, in conjunction with their armed forces counterparts, have intensified efforts to help safeguard ports and military installations. (Photo Courtesy Virginia Tourism Corporation.)



Northern Virginia

Northern Virginia officials had been planning for a potential attack since the mid-1990s. The first Arlington County units arrived at the scene less than three minutes after American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the western side of the Pentagon.

As the response progressed, however, communications were soon hampered by radio system incompatibility and cell phone traffic that exceeded capacity of local carriers.

Traffic of another sort caused major problems on the surrounding highways due to the simultaneous early release of workers in Washington.

Later, Arlington commissioned an independent after-action report, which outlined the county's first response successes and areas for improvement. Analysts presented 235 recommendations and lessons learned.

"As professionals, we must be able to do an even better job if we have to respond to another mass casualty incident today," says Ron Carlee, Arlington County manager.

"Beyond enhancing our own capabilities, we hope this report will help other local governments in their emergency preparedness planning."

Frequent exercises, an effective incident command system and ongoing relationships among participating agencies and localities are vital to an effective response, says Edward Plaugher, Arlington fire chief.

"The ability to manage an incident of this magnitude is obviously a huge hurdle when you're bringing in resources throughout the region," Plaugher says.

"Looking back, our threads of success can be found in the

trust factor of knowing the individuals involved on a first name basis."

Neighboring Fairfax County was also deeply involved in the response effort.

Prior to the attack, they held a number of multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional exercises (including one on Sept. 8) featuring a unified command system, integrated crime scene investigation and mass casualty operations. Ironically, they had scheduled an inter-agency emergency preparedness meeting for Sept. 11.

"The exemplary response proved the Washington Metropolitan Area can successfully respond to a major disaster," says Fairfax deputy county executive Robert Stalzer.

"However, Sept. 11 highlighted areas where we must strengthen emergency management, including emergency response training, intelligence surveillance and public safety communications. As a result, Fairfax County is allocating more time and resources to these efforts than ever before."

Hampton Roads

Unlike most disasters in Virginia, terrorist attacks come with little advanced notice. This is of special concern in the Hampton Roads area with its strategic ports and strong military presence.

Hampton Roads is the first area in the country to organize a regional Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) Plan to address the aftermath of a terrorist attack, including procurement and provision of appropriate pharmaceuticals, equipment and supplies for up to 1,000 victims.

The group is establishing procedures for command and control, notification and alert, public affairs, centralized

communication control, management of medical personnel, supplies and equipment, patient tracking, laboratory support and crowd control.

They are also working on patient evacuation options should outside medical resources be required.

Tabletop exercises will be conducted to ensure that all the various procedures will work together in an effective system.

"The biggest change after 9/11 is that emergency management has given a higher priority to all-hazards planning," says James Talbot, deputy coordinator for Norfolk.

"Before, we had limited our scope to natural disasters or possibly small hazmat events."

Across the James River, Jack Williamson, Newport News emergency management coordinator, is working with business and industry and local schools on preparing the public for an attack.

Like many localities, Newport News already took an active role in anti-terrorism planning, preparations and exercises that spanned both sides of the James River.

After Sept. 11, emergency managers updated those plans, based on FEMA guidance, to reflect the reality of a terrorist attack.

"Along with an extensive revision to our terrorism response plan, the biggest challenge we have faced is creating more overall awareness and preparedness," says Williamson.

Southwest Virginia

This spring, prolonged flooding kept largely rural Southwest Virginia engaged in disaster response and recovery.

In Buchanan County, Emergency Management Coordinator David Thompson,

had his hands full dealing with devastation not seen since their benchmark flood year of 1977.

In a region that prides itself on self-reliance and neighbors helping neighbors, the residents' response to this event astonished him.

"We're pretty far removed from the Pentagon, but I think people everywhere were changed tremendously after 9/11," Thompson says.

"It created a spirit of cooperation and more of a sense of urgency to helping each other. I can't believe how people worked together after the floods to pick up debris and aid in the clean up effort."

Central Virginia

Charlottesville lies about halfway between flood-soaked Southwest Virginia and the shadow of the Pentagon in Arlington, and Emergency Management Coordinator Kaye Harden is working hard to keep his university community ready.

With three overlapping jurisdictions, Harden faces an unusual challenge in preparedness planning for the University of Virginia, the city of Charlottesville and adjacent Albemarle County.

"We started a monthly first responders breakfast to share ideas," Harden says. "This is one way to help communicate, so we'll know one another and be able to work together more efficiently when we meet during a real event."

On June 11, workers eased a charred block of limestone and a steel time capsule into place in the façade of the Pentagon, completing exterior repairs to damaged structure.

Likewise, Virginia emergency managers have laid a firm foundation for enhanced all-hazards preparedness and response for future disasters.



Funds boost public health preparedness

Soon after Dr. Lisa Kaplowitz started her new job last month, she found her role had grown from deputy commissioner for **bioterrorism** preparedness to deputy commissioner for **emergency** preparedness — an all-hazards approach.

The change reflects the agency's expanding role in emergency preparedness and recognition that the health department is involved in many types of disasters, natural and manmade.

In her new position, Dr. Kaplowitz will:

- Expand the agency's emergency preparedness programs.
- Build the public health infrastructure.
- Link with other agency emergency preparedness programs.

In addressing the summer session of the Virginia Emergency Management Association, Kaplowitz outlined initial efforts to translate new state and federal funds into a more comprehensive program to deal with a wide variety of disasters.

So far, the agency has received \$25 million in federal grants monies and \$1.8 million from the state to deal with bioterrorism threats.

Her responsibilities will include managing Virginia's portion of the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile.

"We will distribute antibiotics and vaccines and collaborate with many groups, in the case of a declared emergency," Kaplowitz says.

She will also focus on improving hospital surge capacity in Virginia to handle mass casualty incidents.

While much of the emphasis is on bioterrorism, Kaplowitz says, her office also will address a broad range of public health and infectious disease emergencies.

Dr. Kaplowitz can be reached by phone at (804) 786-3561 or e-mail at lkaplowitz@vdh.state.va.us.



From the CDC to your door. A statewide database, now under development, will identify breakdown and dispensary sites by locality. (Photo Courtesy CDC.)

State sets the stage for deploying pharmaceutical stockpile locally

By George Roarty, Manager, VDEM Chemical Emergency Preparedness

To strengthen emergency distribution of medical supplies nationally, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has increased the number of push packages in the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile from eight to 12, located at 10 strategic sites throughout the country.

The CDC has also modified the composition of the push packages to provide a larger amount of prepackaged, individual regimens of oral antibiotics that come in multi-day, unit-of-use, labeled, child-proof bottles. A portion of the Vendor Managed Inventory will also be packaged in units-of-use, minimizing the need to repackage initially, and expediting distribution and dispensing of medications.

The 12-hour push packages still contain bulk quantities of oral drugs in case the situation demands more individual doses. The resources will support the needs of both treatment and dispensing sites.

VDEM recently sent out a follow-up survey to localities to identify facilities

that may be used to receive, store and breakdown the pharmaceutical supplies, as well as support dispensing operations. A statewide database, now under development, will identify breakdown and dispensary sites by locality.

Though each locality may not have a facility suitable to support the breakdown process, every locality should be represented in the dispensing facility database. VDEM strongly recommends that localities work closely with their local health departments on this initiative.

The departments of Emergency Management and Health are working with the Department of Health Professions to develop a volunteer database of selected health professionals to augment local and state personnel for response and recovery operations.

VDEM is negotiating with United Parcel Service and Federal Express for transportation backup to ensure distribution of stockpiled supplies.

For more information about the pharmaceutical stockpile program, contact George Roarty at (804) 897-6500, ext. 6574, or groarty@vdem.state.va.us.

DOJ Grants Roundup

Pipeline fills for first responders

Since the Sep. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, Congress has accelerated approval of a wide range of programs designed to strengthen local abilities to respond to terrorist attacks.

Though there is a significant amount of funding in the pipeline, little of this money has actually arrived in Virginia and much of it is dedicated to specific equipment and activities. Most of what we expect to arrive this year is similarly obligated.

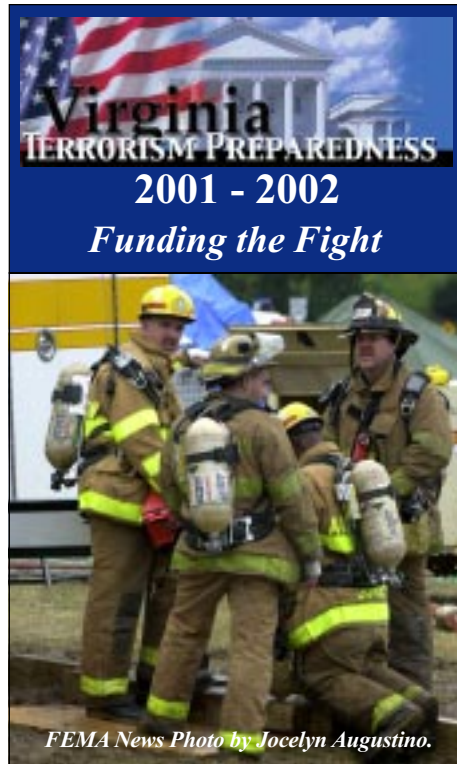
Currently, three primary Department of Justice (DOJ) grants affect Virginia's first responder equipment purchases:

1999 Funds. Virginia's application for these funds required us to specify precisely what was to be purchased and to whom the equipment would be provided.

Equipment purchased will be allocated to regional response teams located throughout the state to enhance Virginia's regional response capabilities.

A portion of this equipment will be passed to Regional Hazardous Materials Teams and other locally based teams. Purchases and distribution are now underway.

Virginia has reserved some funds for distribution as subgrants to local governments. These subgrants will be available to local governments for purchases in the original grant equipment categories (communications, decontamination,



FEMA News Photo by Jocelyn Augustino.
Arlington County first responders at the Pentagon.

detection and monitoring, and personal protective equipment). First responder agencies will be advised when the subgrants are available.

DOJ 2000/2001 Funds. VDEM has applied for these funds. The goal of this program is to provide local governments

with at least a portion of the equipment (same four categories as the 1999 grant) they deem necessary.

Funding provided to localities will likely be for equipment purchases related to the needs assessment completed earlier this year. VDEM will advise local governments when these funds are available and will supply instruction for the subgrant process.

DOJ 2002 Funds. Virginia has applied for these funds. The number of equipment categories has increased under the 2002 grants (i.e., bomb technician and heavy and technical rescue equipment may now be eligible).

The DOJ process requires that applications for 2000-2001 grants must be received and approved before submissions can be made for the 2002 grant.

The President's 2003 Budget includes a line item for \$3.5 billion nationwide to assist in equipping and training first responders. If Congress approves this budget item and the President signs the bill, these funds could become available some time after October 2002.

As funds become available over the next few years, opportunities may arise for agencies to receive grants for specific equipment, training and planning efforts. The state will notify affected agencies about when, where and how to apply for such grants when they become available.

EMERS yourself in disaster response

Though their response to the Pentagon attack was both professional and prompt, Northern Virginia emergency managers still reviewed the outcomes to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

With the Emergency Management Exercise Reporting System (EMERS), coordinators now have a new tool at their disposal to capture this critical data for both training exercises and actual responses.

EMERS evaluates capability strengths and weaknesses against a set of 13

functional area criteria. Emergency managers can:

- Track annual accomplishments against a multi-year exercise cycle.
- Identify the type of hazard, objectives, scope and number of participants for each exercise.
- Request exercise credit for actual occurrences.
- Identify areas where corrective or remedial action is needed.

Corrective action may require revising the existing plan, conducting additional training for personnel or updating the organization's infrastructure and equipment.

In addition to aiding localities, the Windows-based computer program also enables VDEM to determine state trends,

target resource priorities and develop strategic plans.

EMERS 2000 requires a Pentium-based computer with memory of at least 16MB (32MB or more highly recommended); Windows 95 or higher or Windows NT-4.0 or higher; a minimum 10MB hard disk space with MS Access 97 or 2000 already installed; and a monitor 15" or larger. A laptop that allows the EMERS screens to show in full also will work.

Download instructions using Access 97 or Access 2000 are available on the VDEM Web site, www.vaemergency.com.

To learn more about EMERS, contact Curt Nellis at (804) 897-6500, ext. 6558, or cnellis@vdem.state.va.us.

Training Calendar

Emergency Management

ISC/EOC Interface

Oct. 2-3/Northern Virginia

Leadership and Influence

Oct. 9-11/Chesterfield

Decision Making in a Crisis

Oct. 22/Chesterfield

Effective Communication

Oct. 23-25/Chesterfield

Community Outreach Conference

Nov. 19-20/Richmond

Radiological

Field Team Monitoring

Oct. 30/Chesterfield

Reservist Training

Reservist Program Orientation

Sept. 10/Richmond (New Reservists)

Action Tracking/Tabletop Exercise

Oct. 3/Richmond (VEOC Reservists)

Community Relations Workshop

Oct. 22/Roanoke

Search and Rescue

Managing Land for Search Operations

Sep. 27-29 & Nov. 8-10/
Charlottesville

Incident Commander for Ground SAR

Oct. 18-20/Richmond

SAR Council

Oct. 26/Richmond

Technological Hazards

Public Safety Response to Terrorism (PSRT) - Awareness

Sep. 14/Sussex

Sep. 22/Sussex

Oct. 5/Wytheville

Hazmat Planning & Mgmt.

Sep. 13-15/Bristol

PSRT - Management

Sep. 14-15/Henrico

Hazmat Technician

Oct. 14-25/Ashland

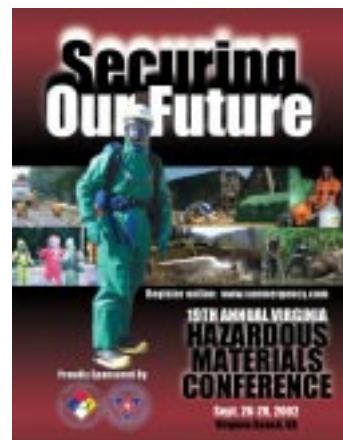
Hazmat hits the beach

The 19th annual Virginia Hazardous Materials Conference opens Sept. 26-28 in Virginia Beach.

John Hager, assistant to the governor for commonwealth preparedness, will deliver the keynote address.

Seventy-two workshops are scheduled, including the following sessions: *FBI Operations at a WMD Event, Capitol Hill Anthrax Site — Lessons Learned, Ground Zero Terrorism, Mass Fatality Management, the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile, Clandestine Drug Labs and the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Medical Response System.*

Visit the VDEM Web site at www.vaemergency.com for conference details and registration information.



Want to learn more about Virginia terrorism preparedness? Visit www.vaemergency.com/prepare/terrorismtoolkit/terrorismtoolbox.cfm.



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